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A visitors Diary.

Sunday 16th June.

JAR

Arrived on site at Inuit Wells at 1.15
having taken this to be 245 miles.
Concave was so hot, that as soon as I had
unpacked I shut off to the east to cool down.
Can't imagine how hot it will be on
Bedmin Moor! At least there was a breeze
on the cliffs at Boscawen.

At 7pm strolled around the site to see
if anyone has appeared — heard from
someone who said that his wife was
on the excavations, that they don't
get back till 8pm — guess how what
time the they begin in the morning?
Sounds like an extremely long day!
Have the distinct feeling that this
is going to be like an excavation I have
ever experienced before! But interesting!

the meeting up with Sue & Mike —
 hear the expectations, problems etc — but
 constantly assured that I'll love the sites —
 & the views are spectacular. Will the trenches
 be finished in time seems a main problem,
 but as Sue said, "there's always next year".
 'Stone' (appears for much of it!) — is it
 a house platform or a cairn? This seems
 to be today's problem — what were thought
 to be house platforms, Chris T. now
 thinks are cairns

Monday

Fully warned about the long walk - but still didn't realise just how far the site was from any access point. Then, just how small the sites were. At least you can locate the areas of settlement by the crowned flags!

Some problems appeared to be on the way to being solved in Helen's trench. The moving of a standing stone (once fallen) was debated for a while - & the actual removal from its fallen position took much less time than the discussion - but that's archaeology for you! Adapting to the arch. - so different from Sinslex - is taking a while - understanding the stone alignment, its possible destruction & then trying to make sense of the evidence, whilst the debates go round & round takes getting used to!

At least problems & ideas are chewed over, with all sorts of ideas discussed, assimilated or thrown out as necessary (this gives most people a chance to put forward their

ideas & hear those of others) Really a very hot day - but no-one flags, they all seem to keep going. By the end of the day I feel exhausted, & after the long walk home - (longer than any site I've ever been on)

The scenery is wonderful & keeps changing so there's always something to look at.

The wild life is great, apart from horses, cattle & sheep, there are rabbits running around, & birds which seem more unusual to the ones we get in Sussex.

Everyone seems very friendly although didn't see much of the anthropologists as they are some distance from Helen's trench, in fact most people are some distance away!

Beginning to see that ideas that appear strange off-site seem appropriate actually on Bodmin Moor. Really enjoying being on a site again! Lots of angst over walls & wobbling - was the wall built on top

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of the cabling, or before cabling laid - but
only time will prove the sequence & there
are now only 5 days to go - Mike feels
the problems of his house so personally

Tuesday 18th June

Arrived on site about 9.30 — seeing as we left Inuit's Well about 8.00, you can see where the time goes. The anthropologists arrive about an hour or so later!

The trench of the stone alignment terminal appears to be progressing well. Another small stone shifted, & a pit, connected to the next to last stone of the alignment seems, at last, to be taking shape & making more sense.

I still don't feel confident about the intermediate contexts — but I do recognise natural. Today spent trenching, making & updating plans — but tomorrow, the large stone should be lifted into (well nearly) original position — mostly so that we can see the crevasse of the stone.

The day is long — work finishes about 6 but it is about 7 pm by the time we leave — & by that time all I want

is to step into the shower! The day doesn't drag because there still is much to do → it is interesting — plus the situation is beautiful.

Enjoying being back on site again, even if there are problems in equipment — but it doesn't affect the archaeology — really pleased that I'm only digging → not interpreting the evidence.

WEDNESDAY.

We decided to walk the shorter distance to the site because we would visit the pub on our way home. It was a considerably longer drive & an extremely boring walk. Almost immediately onto the moor, without any views - like walking through a 'bowl' - just bleak moor on all sides. Once over the ridge, the site is in view with Brown Willy behind - opening up the landscape.

The terminal trench near completion by the end of the day. Decisions made not to raise the stone - because laying it down after could cause problems. Found the first 'post-hole' for this season (nothing to do with me!) - & might find more when certain areas have top contexts instructed off - but too late now to want to deal with them.

Enthusiasm, optimism, doubt, despair seem to range amongst the workers - almost a daily swing - but the site

is extremely difficult to make sense of & what with no artefacts turning up - it is all very strange. Mike thinks that Chris G will be able to interpret his hut on his return - why I can't imagine - seeing as he has been away for a few days. Perhaps a joint discussion around the house will resolve one or two problems (or simply make matters worse!)

Walking around Leskernick Hill is almost mind-blowing trying to make a reasonable explanation of huts/corins, orientation, fields - wonderful stuff!! Just hope I can recognize my photos when they're printed - they might turn out looking like some = piles of rocks!

When we got back to the site, Chris G had arrived & later Sue, Chris & I chewed over the site & actions of workers, the Unit & the meaning of life! Mike, demoralized, went to bed early.

THURSDAY

Rained all night & into the morning.
 We had decided on a late start, after
 visiting the town just thing for supplies.
 Got onto site about 10.45 & it poured!
 After a drink we set off ~~the~~ to check the
 sites & decide the strategy for the next 2 days.
 Despite Mike's despondency about his site,
 Chris was pleased with his efforts, even if
 nothing had come out of his section.
 Hut 39 also looked great — although nothing
 more will be done for this season, this was
 probably too ambitious for the number of
 excavators available.

The stone terminal looked good — the rain
 had helped. We took the fences down &
 the site instantly became part of the
 landscape — CT was right about fences
 shutting off the site. Mike then completed

the day by fitting a small block to the top end of the standing stone - & it was obvious that it had been broken off - the fitting together of the stones gave a much better shape to the stone's profile. Mike, at last, began to return to our world again.

We decided to take the rest of the day off & visit the hunters & the Cheese wing. Spent about 3 hours walking around the area - & again wonderful views - yet more enclosures & house platforms. Think that by the time I returned to the caravan I was more exhausted than working all day! Very enjoyable! Sue - where do you get your energy from??

Thursday Friday

Summer Solstice

Another day down & the long walk ahead!
We don't think anyone slept on the hill
over night - the weather was changeable
& certainly not good enough to sleep outside!
The day generally was spent doing odd jobs
from site to site - as we start to wind down
there is no point extending the work as
there would be little chance of finishing it

For a good part of the day we were
surrounded by moose & their trails - it was
quite magical.

Today, being summer solstice, some of the
group were going to stay on the hill to
see the sun set behind the quoit. It had
been a colder, windy day, even though the
sky was clear by the evening. Barbara had
prepared some food - but we had already
decided to 'eat out' & we were cold & didn't
really fancy 3½ further hours on the hill.

If we had had the day off I would have
 been prepared to go up - but after 8 hrs +
 I had enough. Leaving obviously created
 tensions & brought underlying feelings to
 the surface. She was upset by the result
 of these tensions (why do ^(especially CT's) ~~top~~ ^{putance} ~~top~~ ^{putance}
 such divisions - when we are all supposed
 to be working towards the same aims!).
 How do the divisions between anthropologists
 & archaeologists appear so vast? Is it simply
 because neither side really appreciate the
 aims & methods of retrieval of information
 of the other. I suppose we are just as
 guilty but it does seem so childish at times!
 She stayed on to see the Cornish Arch GP
 & we met her at 10 pm at the ford &
 she was still settling. The whole of the
 future of the project could balance on
 the outcome of how things progress,

→ hopefully bridges will be built to repair the communication breakdown.

After having a meal, without one who joined us later in my opinion, we discussed last few days events over the usual glances of whiskey → tried to sort out different ways of running projects, → their successes, → personalities

Two re-constructed standing stones put in site 'in situ' — think that this should have been kept till after the trench had been finished — but antmops probably don't understand this idea!

Still it was solstice day so I suppose it was vaguely relevant!

All-round, an exhausting day, mentally, as well as physically.

SATURDAY

Today spent doing odd jobs, from planning, mattocking & backfilling of house 39. The weather is better but still chilly & very windy - have to keep working to keep warm. Less people on site today - only BB, CT & Henry from other group & this gave us more chance to actually discuss things with them. Charlie taken to station. Although quite a mature 14 yr old it was weird for him really to be on site without others his age or real supervision - mixing with archaeologists off-site isn't probably the best education for a young person.

Helen gave whoop & did a little wiggle dance once we finished excav. her trench. The 3 wooden stakes were erected soon after & I took photos from the hill. House 39 backfilled & topped.

Mike still has not quite finished his trench - obviously with more experience things will speed up.

Martin arrived on site to take pollen samples - & we all left at a reasonable hour. She had dinner with CT & BB whilst Mike, Chris & I went into Camelford, to the Mason's Arms for dinner. We met up later for drinks & continued to talk into early hours in my car, discussing the site & chewing over the rights & wrongs. Did invite BB & CT for a drink but they obviously felt disinclined to come.

SUNDAY

Went by the short walk route.

Everyone began backfilling terminal trench, which took up to lunch time. Afternoon spent trying & then retreating. I did agree with one that it was important to do it well because it was so much more visible than the others. Chris G returfed House 39 & made a much better job of it.

Problem - truck ordered for 3pm but only message left on answer-phone.

Had lunch on Quoit with 'Blues' - Mike jumped & landed heavily off Quoit & pulled a muscle. There should have been a mobile phone on-site for emergencies - luckily not needed - but?!?!.

Truck doesn't appear - so land-survey people carry things to cars. We carry on tamping etc. 3 people return & take more off - should have been more people available it seems a mess - quite how we are going to do it I can't imagine.

Chris T. returns with refreshments at about 6.45pm whilst we are sitting out

Mike's trench — which we finish soon after. Between 8 & 9 we carry all equipment off site — leaving only stake pools etc behind. Whole thing is not the best way to end site & most people exhausted & fed up. It's 9pm when we arrive at the known site — too late to go out for dinner.

She cooks what she had left & I took my remains over & S; M, & CT & I lunched well & gradually others joined us for drinks. She manages to spin 2 glasses of red wine on new carpet — needed lbs of salt to get rid of stains! Generally a pleasant evening with a lot of laughs. Fall into bed late having done nothing for the morning's departure.

Conclusions

Communications between the 2 groups was not very good. Neither side fully understood methods involved & constantly criticize & carp - which is ridiculous. Probably would be best if they operated at different times & then got together at end of surveys/excavations.

The excavation needs more experienced people - not 14 yr old boys & young guys. Need people to get on with work & not be constantly supervised. Too much expected this year - too ambitious. But everything is a learning curve - next year should be better!

A little frustrated by pace of excavation - but have to adjust to Research pace & not rescue

A landrover would help get equipment & people to site + mobile phone essential for being in such an isolated area. Was enough thought about Health & Safety? More equipment would have been useful - but some stolen from site early on.

Caravan site was good enough for our purposes - a place to sleep, wash & eat - also a bar to relax in - very necessary for those camping.

Wouldn't have missed the experience for the world - completely different approaches & time scales - views stupendous - egos mountains - long days & exhaustion but July rewarded by company present! Will have an forever about & probably bore everyone silly!

Need a holiday to get over the last few days!

SUNDAY June 1st.

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Last night, at 9.30pm, decided that we would go to Cornwall. Got up early this morning & threw a few more items into bags, removing most of what had been put in 2 days before. Final decision to go depended on Russell's health - so visited hospital at 8.30am to see how he was. Luckily he is well on the way to recovery & insisted that we had our arranged holiday. Picked up De & John & set off at 10am - took a comfort stop at another Russell household in Bournemouth en route to Cornwall.

Journey went well - traffic not too bad & arrived at Juliots Well by 4.30pm. Did our unpacking quickly & shot off to the coast, via Tintagel, to Boscastle, as this is probably the only chance that I'll get to see another part of Cornwall that isn't the moor. Whilst John & De prepared the dinner, a rather shabby van with 'fastbomne' written all over it drove into the car park & I realised that it had to contain archaeologists - & Sue & Mike stepped from it! Sue raved about the site, so I'm looking forward to seeing Leakey's tomorrow. After phoning home, Russ said it had just started raining in Brighton - so hope that Bodmin is spared as we have realised that in our hurry to pack we seem to have left lots of important items behind, such as waterproofs! Great to be back in Cornwall - even the caravan park seemed inviting - just hope that the moor is! Not so sure about the Sociologist & his questionnaire?!?

Met up later in the bar, everyone seemed friendly & appeared to be getting on, just hope that this is the case.

June 2nd : Monday

Slept quite well, although the caravan's single bed does rather restrict movement. Feels rather chilly & sky looks overcast — but, as yet, its not raining. Try to think of what food & drink I'll need for the day — as I'm starting already think that it might be a long day foodwise! Wish that I'd brought my thermos flask & thermal undies!

Began to rain on way to site — we went the longer route, slightly alternative to last year's route — turning left by the dead horse (which either rained or had been taken away during the day?)

Leskermine was just how I remembered it — hardly seems like a year since I was last here! The two hut sites had really had a lot of work done on them, plus excavation of a possible coin — I can't believe so much has taken place within one week. I spend the first part of the day drawing the coin & then after coffee break moving on to Chris' hut — trying to finish off John's plan — of which I am impressed because he has never drawn a site like this!

We all get wet through before lunch & no-one knows whether to continue or not. Eventually after packing up 3 times we decide to continue — although most travellers go back to the camp site (via the pub) whilst 4 of us stay on. During the afternoon get 'buzzed' by helicopter, which hovers very low & watches me working — didn't offer me a lift off the moor! Rain stops play, get again & by 3:15pm we pack up — get again! Well at least I've managed to do something on site.

Phone home & all is well with Run's progress — but think that we'll have to return on Thursday.

John & De spend day working around Camelford trying to avoid the showers. John has his usual collection of beetle insects & Jowers to look at through his microscope before lunch. He lets the live insects go free after studying them & their sex lives! His parents arrive soon after dinner & take them off to Port Scatho for a day & night — probably best as the forecast isn't that good & they haven't got any waterproofs — still hope that they can walk over Bodmin moor on Wednesday & that it'll be dry.

The evening is spent in the Rising Sun pub — they do serve a good selection of beers there & the food isn't bad either. Sue & Mike don't materialise — probably had too much paper work to catch up on. Manage to light the gas fire eventually on return from pub — still raining & everything feels damp! Everyone appears to be getting on well — but it would be interesting to see what'll happen next week when the Anthropologists arrive?! There's a much more relaxed atmosphere this year — but a lot of work has taken place so they haven't been hanging about. I've filled in Sociologist Mike's forms — so await with interest my interview on the questionnaire. Get back to the lodger & its pouring with rain — do hope that tomorrow's weather is better — but not much hope of that — it isn't rain all night & all day — or perhaps it can !!!

June 3rd: Tues

Slept extremely well - due to last night's drink intake. At least it's not raining at the moment - sky is overcast but not too dark. After a slightly later start, we go the shorter walk to the site.

Arrive at Chris's site to find the trenches flooded - but at least I can carry on finishing the planning. It is really quite cold, & then at coffee break we find that the spirit for the burner has been left behind - oh well I'll have to finish off the orange juice.

After lunch I plan the next stage of the ?coirn?. Apparently it's beginning to look like a pile of stones rather than a built structure. Towards the end of the day the sun actually shines & the moor looks lovely, & I begin to feel much warmer - try to remind myself that it is June!

We return to the ^{coirn} site - with the constraint of some going to the pub & ~~our~~ our car (Chris's) returning to site. We don't seem to be able to communicate our drinking times - obviously need more practice!! Tonight's drinking at the coirn & site pub has been arranged for 9.45pm - see if we can all make it for that time. Lesley & Stuart have left as they have to be at Bignor on Wed. evening - & I'll be teaching them planning & section drawing on Sunday & Monday!

John & De return from his parents, having done their duty visiting family in Cornwall. De & I phone home - Russ is fine & hopes to leave hospital tomorrow providing his temperature has gone down. Justin appears to be coping with everything & hopes to return to Bodmin on Friday.

Wed. 4th June.

Wake up to a cheerful sky - forecast is good, at last!
 De & John come with us to Westmargate & walk across
 the moor to the site. After a quick view of the 3 trenches
 they set off for Brown Willy, Rough Tor & John's Well.
 I begin to help Mike by removing the cluttered area around
 the outside of his structure - this takes the best part of
 the day. Three-quarters of an hour after De & John leave
 we see a mirror flashing from top of Brown Willy -
 signalling their arrival & we all wave back but doubt
 that they can see us.

Walking across the moor, as we had approached
 Eskernick, we could see the sun reflecting off something
 & couldn't work out what it was. It might have
 been a wheel barrow, - suggested that it was a
 special quartz rock & perhaps this is why
 Eskernick is set in a ritual landscape - the quality
 of the stones reflecting the sun's rays ~~was~~ made it
 unique. Unfortunately as we got closer we realised that
 it was the white ground-sheet spread ~~of~~ over Chris' trench
 to protect the 'so-called' features. What a disappointment!

Lunch time was spent having my 'interview' with
 sociologist Mike. Actually it was quite interesting discussing
 points from my past, family & connections to archaeology.
 He is not what I had expected & is an interesting
 person in his own right - even he has done archaeology!
 Quite what he makes of us all will be interesting - hope
 I get to read the report!

Later part of the afternoon spent drawing Chris' ephemeral
 features & then take levels. This rounds up my 3 days'
 work on Eskernick. Have really enjoyed my time here
 although brief! But lucky to get here at all
 considering everything. There's always next year.

There is a lovely atmosphere this year - everyone appears to get on well - hope I've not missed any undercurrents.

The archaeology has really sped on - so by the end of the excavations - hopefully more sense will be made of the structures. It certainly seems to have worked well - by getting the archaeology moving on - but then everyone has more experience than last year.

Mike's last question was 'what do you make of the site'? Well I'm just as confused as ever - need to be here longer to understand what is happening - but it ^{still} might not help. Still only about 5 minuscule steps - very difficult to help date sites.

C¹⁴ might be the answer - by charcoal - but I didn't find any - did I miss it or was there none where I was travelling. I think this site will stay 'enigmatic' for some time longer.

The day stayed bright & I really enjoyed the feel of being on the hill - back to reality tomorrow! Phoned home - & Russ is out of hospital - glad to be home - & Joshin is coping. He'll need a break - coming back to ~~B~~ Leskernick might help - he'll be back here on Friday.

De & John thoroughly enjoyed their walk on the moor returning to the caravan site at 2pm - taking 4 1/2 hrs from Leskernick. They then became real holiday makers by playing tennis & having a swim in the pool - something none of us have the time or the inclination to do!

The lure of Leskernick has not diminished - Sue was right about its appeal & how easy it is to fall under its spell - a magical place! Thanks for having me in the project Sue!